

Before the Bullet Struck Him

By FRIDA SCHANZ.

Translated, with Introductory Comment, by William L. McPherson.

What follows is not a story; it is a rhapsody, a prose poem. The author, Frida Schanz (Frau Frida Schanz), calls it "A Voice from the Front." It is a voice which gives expression to a certain exaltation of temper produced by the colossal demands and sacrifices of the present war.

In the stoicism, the abnegation, the disregard of self which are mirrored in the mood of the owner of the voice there is more than the ordinary fervor of patriotism. There is a sort of spiritual ecstasy, of philosophic abstraction, which seems strangely out of keeping with the ordinary war settings. It is a true mood, however, not a forced or fantastic one; for signs of its existence are often encountered in the self-revelations of soldiers and in other war literature.

Frida Schanz is a well known poet, journalist and short story writer. This piece of hers is steeped in poetry. It is approached by few other war stories or sketches in elevation of thought and style.

ONE is the tension of the earlier days. Also the sense of horror. After so many months of battle I have finally learned to go composedly through the long weeks, filled with blood and death.

The second summer is drawing to an end. For the second time I see the slopes of the Vosges grow red and gold with autumn foliage. On warm evenings a soft haze hangs over them, violet blue, with streaks of lilac, such as the Alban Hills take on as a Roman summer's day begins to wane. I see melancholy castle ruins hang over devastated villages. The war has made frightful marks on the face of this whole region. But I have seen so much that is beautiful mutilated or given to the flames!

At first my hand trembled whenever an old church pew or altar picture was consigned to destruction. Suddenly in the midst of my work of spoliation I felt as I used to do in those far-off days, when peace was still on earth and the dark Reaper had not yet begun his winnowing, when my whole world was a museum in a North German city and all my thoughts were centred in the study of the great artists of ancient times.

Like an impulse of nature was this inner protest whenever anything beautiful was destroyed. But now that has passed. The innermost core of my being is laid bare. I stand on guard on the border of the Empire. The wind plays with my whitening hairs. I see life differently. Verses and etchings, Old Masters, Southern Madonnas—their fascination has vanished. War is my handiwork. Death in all its forms stalks by my side—and I am often astonished to find how different he is from the Death in the woodcuts of Dürer, in the old pictures of the Apocalypse, in the Dance of Death of Holbein.

This new Death in battle—how the modern artillery and the modern inventions have transformed him through the monstrous and incredibly ingenious achievements of science and the technical arts!

I look at him calmly, almost with the cool self-possession of a connoisseur. The comrades who have stood shoulder to shoulder with me on the summits of the Vosges—how often have their places become vacant! If not one day, then another! We know our fate; we are ignorant only of the date on which it will be accomplished. Almost with astonishment one sees the dawn of a new morning, surprised that one has really lived through the preceding day.

Is it a discipline—this existence of ours—or is it a privilege? To be chosen to stand as guardians of the borderland of the Empire, where the spirits of the heroes of Mars-la-Tour and Gravelotte seem on moonlight nights to hover on the horizon—drawing the German sword a second time to fight for a fiercely contested province?

And to think that that same moonlight plays about the cathedrals of Metz and Strassburg! When I dream at nights in my dugout I rebuild them in thought—so long familiar to me in all the enchantment of their finials and their rose-tinted window clusters. And in the bright midday hours I often seem to hear the peal of their giant bells which announce to the shouting crowds in the streets the great victories in the East—those fabulous, inspiring episodes in world history, illustrating to us, with our slow and painful progress from trench to trench, a glorious, ideal form of warfare.

We are held close to our mountain heights—to our dugouts. Our mission is to hold fast, to stand on the defensive. And death wanders ever through our ranks. We are always carrying comrades to their graves, carving crosses and lining up sadly around fresh made mounds. Sadly? But why?

Why does it so often run through my head what Goethe wrote: "Man is too petty for his destiny"? And why am I dissatisfied with myself because I sometimes doubt whether such quickly won immortality is really a privilege?

Those who have been thrust prematurely through Death's gate, who have known only the brief morning of life, to whom no high noon is vouchsafed, cut off from happiness, love, success, the development of their intellects and the possibilities of their careers—will they not be recompensed in another existence for having in this life travelled so quick and short a road to Valhalla?

The eighteen-year-old boys, with their smooth childish brows, their soft heads of hair and their prematurely defective eyes—are they not "seed sown by God, to ripen for the days of harvest"?

Often I regard these early sleepers almost with envy. Yes, sorrow and lamentation must be silenced among us. They are for those at home. These stern times must make us stern. We must become as invulnerable as Siegfried, as if we had been baptized with dragon's blood. Yes, many times I ask myself: "Do I still wish to return home safely?"

THIS DAY IN HISTORY---By Rea Irvin

A Voice from the Front

Continued from first column of this page.

Is it not much more important to have lived in this time than to live through it?

Shall I in peace browse once more in ancient folios, toil up stone staircases, by lamplight, still vainly seek to win your love, O far-off friend?

Could I submit again to all the old bondage of conventions after Life's values have been so completely altered? Should I be able to do without the scent of the moist soil which rises from these hills and mountains? And could a rose, plucked in a well-ordered city garden, ever be to me what the coral-red mountain ash tree is, which shimmers in the light above our dug-out?

I have seen pictures which were more wonderful than the gold-framed ones in the great galleries.

I have seen heroes die, disappearing proudly and without a murmur into the great Nirvana.

I have seen brooks as red with blood as those which flow down from the hills of Carrara are white with the dust of the marble quarries.

The fearful beauty of war—that I have seen in overpowering pictures, painted in sunset reds and pigments of fire.

Airmen, like beautiful, magic birds out of Arabian tales, circling in the ether and then suddenly falling, stricken by a shot from an anti-aircraft gun.

Zeppelins gliding darkly through blue summer nights, as dignified and stately as ambassadors from another world.

How could I, after all this, recover my taste for the tamer pictures of peace? Perhaps I should see only the dust on the old folios covers and my memories would always be more alluring to me than all the possibilities of the future.

Therefore do not grieve for me if some day, sooner or later, your letters to me come back marked undeliverable.

It would have been seemly for you to weep if I had fallen in the first weeks of this fateful period. But not now, when long months have passed and hecatombs of heroes have perished. An unexampled sacrifice of human lives! But now that the sacrifice has become limitless, the individual can no longer demand anything for himself.

We, who have lived for a year on Death's threshold, fear him not. He is to us no strange, fearful figure. He is a familiar neighbor, who stands before another's door and any hour may stand before ours. And we greet him with our eyes when we are tired and worn with never ceasing battles:

"Come! You do not frighten us. We are as strong as you are."

I have three books in my knapsack—Homer, the New Testament and "Faust."

A little legacy for you, if I depart. As in the "Ode of Propertius," which in my school-days I translated into rhymed verses, on jasmine-scented summer evenings by the most embankment at home:

"Drei Bücher nehm' ich mit von dieser Erde, Die ich der bleichen Kora schenken werde."

But no! What would the heathen goddess do with my New Testament?

Rather I shall write my name in the volumes, honored friend, and if sometimes you run your fingers through the pages may you remember that my weary eyes have rested on their lines in the uncounted nights when the hard work was over, the thunder ceased to roll and the dead were buried.

But do not wish me back!

You and the others shall enjoy what the future brings, when the dome of the new era towers in splendor over the German lands, when the fruits so dearly paid for ripen. But we shall gladly stretch our war-weary limbs in the fresh turned earth. We shall enjoy our well-earned sleep, free from cares or misgivings. For we press onward in the conviction that God leads our people forward with his pillar of fire.

And if at the last moment the blood rushes in our ears it sounds to us like the beating of the wings of the Eagle of Victory. We smile, proud that we, too, in this great drama of sacrifice are permitted to cast the tiny mite of our existence into the brazen scales in which the fate of the world is being readjusted.

Jupiter shines through the twigs of the mountain ash into my dugout. My candle is burned out. If it were not, I might venture to say what my unready lips have so often balked at saying—how much I love you—friend of my soul, so dear, so unattainable. But the wax drops already on my hand. I must wait until another morning sun arises.

THE KID AT THE MOVIES.

"BUT, Mama, why does the man wear earrings? And why does he walk that way?"

(Reply inaudible.) "Well, who are the men in the automobile? And why is the cowboy chasing them?"

(Reply gaining strength.) "Is there a choo-choo car in this picture, Mama? I like the choo-choo pictures."

(Reply short and snappy.) "WHY isn't there, Mama?"

(Reply brief and unsatisfactory.) "Yes, they could, Mama. They could tie him to the track and let the—O-o-o-o-o, Mama, look! What made the automobile turn upside down in the water?"

(Reply evasive and inclined to be sketchy.) "But, Mama, where is the lady in the old mill? Did the big rats eat her up? Could rats really swim like that, Mama?"

(Reply incoherent.) "But I don't understand. Why didn't the man with the earrings kill him, Mama? Wasn't his knife sharp enough?"

(Reply apparently unbelievable.) "But does she always escape, Mama? Aren't they ever going to kill her?"

[EDITORIAL NOTE: There are two endings to this. Early movies, it ends around 9 o'clock. Late movies, about 11.]



The Female Bathing Suit First Appears, September 17, 1816.

ARE WOMEN PEOPLE?

By Alice Duer Miller

A GREAT advance has been made by the suffragists of America.

A President of the United States has addressed them—

Without comparing them to Hottentots.

The women are grateful to Mr. Wilson for his courtesy, as well as for his promise to help in their battle.

They will be proud to fight with him. Not too proud.

Just proud enough.

Yet they cannot but recall the recent words of a prominent Democratic candidate, who said in accepting the nomination for high office:

"They (the people of the United States) are not in the habit of rejecting those who have actually served them for those who are making doubtful and conjectural promises."

In this connection we are in a position to state definitely that women are people.

It was noted that while President Wilson recommended the suffragists to

await the attainment of their end with patience, he announced himself as impatient of discussion concerning the practical methods by which this end could be reached.

If the suggestion of Mr. Heflin, now several years old, that every man who believed in woman suffrage should wear a dress, should be carried out, what novelty would now be introduced into the Presidential campaign!

Suppose this had happened last week in the suffrage convention:

"The delegate has sweetbreads for brains when she makes such a charge," shouted Mrs. X, of Blank. . . . Mrs. Y, as she finished reading the dispatch, leaped toward the middle aisle, overturning Delegate W as she did so, and rushed toward Mrs. X. . . .

Would it not prove that women were too emotional to vote?

But as it, or something similar, took place only in the United States Senate, it is not considered to prove anything at all.

As was observed by Portia, "I would rather teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow my own teachings."

"Impatience is a fault," said she, "And you may live to say, 'Oh, how I wish I had the votes That once I threw away!'"

"When the people of a state," exclaims "The New York World," in an impassioned editorial against the Federal Amendment, "are no longer able to say who shall vote and who shall not vote in their local election, they might as well shut up shop and throw their state government into the scrap-heap."

But the object of the Federal Amendment is to allow the people of a state to vote.

If, that is, women are people.

A conservative writer in "The Evening Post" counts among the doubtful states in the coming campaign the following woman suffrage states: Arizona, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming. Some people add California and Colorado to this list.

According to figures issued by the

Congressional Union Leader the following percentages would have changed the result of the vote in the elections of 1912, in each of these states:

Arizona7.2	Montana3.4
California0.01	Nevada5.9
Colorado7.8	Wyoming0.9

It seems as if a little work on either side would go a long way.

"You are too pretty to be fined, but the next homely woman that comes before me for the same offence will have to suffer," said Justice Duyster, of Glen Cove, N. J., according to "The New York World," the other day.

We wonder how the next homely woman will view the indirect influence as a complete system of protection.

And, by the way, we wonder also why, if home is really woman's most alluring sphere, the good old adjective made from that throne and shrine should have come to have so unpleasant a meaning.

There was a story current in the convention that the last time the anti-suffragists opened a shop in Atlantic City they subtlet one without troubling to take down the sign of the former tenant, which read: ORIENTAL MYSTERIES.